

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-13, 16, 19-26 and 31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 21 and 22 are amended.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments:

(a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiner Handal during the December 5, 2006 personal interview. Applicants separate record of the personal interview is incorporated into the remarks below.

Claims 1 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, the word "predetermined" has been removed. Use of the phrase "effective diameter" can be found in the original claims, for example. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Minet et al. (Minet), U.S. Patent No. 4,981,676. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As agreed during the personal interview, Minet fails to disclose a fuel reforming apparatus with a honeycomb filtering member, as recited in claim 1, or soot trapping means that includes a honeycomb filtering member, as recited in claim 21.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4-10, 12, 13, 16, 20 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Minet in view of LaPierre et al. (LaPierre), U.S. Patent No. 6,348,278. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Minet and LaPierre fail to disclose or suggest a fuel reforming apparatus where the reforming catalyst is carried by the filtering member on the second face on the side of the processed gas flow passage, as recited in claim 31.

Page 9 of the Office Action admits that Minet fails to disclose this feature. As discussed during the personal interview, LaPierre fails to disclose the first face and the second face as defined by claim 31. Accordingly, because LaPierre fails to disclose the second face of claim 31, LaPierre also fails to also disclose a reforming catalyst that is carried by the filtering member on the second face. Contrary to the Office Action, col. 5, lines 39-43 of LaPierre fails to discuss a reforming catalyst that is carried by the filtering member/wash-coated monolith matrix on the second face.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Minet in view of Abe et al. (Abe), U.S. Patent No. 6,576,203, claims 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Minet in view of Hwang et al. (Hwang), U.S. Patent No. 4,522,894, and Doty et al. (Doty), U.S. Patent No. 5,098,455, and claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Minet in view of Jahnke et al. (Jahnke), U.S. Patent No. 6,149,859. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

None of the remaining applied references overcome the deficiencies of Minet and LaPierre in disclosing or suggesting all of the features recited in claims 1, 21 and 31. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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